



Somaliland Update / January 2022

Dear friends,

Happy New Year.

Since the Somaliland Mission's last newsletter, there have been a number of significant developments for our country and the region, including a visit to the U.S. by Foreign Minister Essa Abdirahme Kayd and Special Envoy Edna Adan Ismail, and a U.S. Congressional staff delegation visit to Somaliland.

This update provides more details on these and other important milestones, which I hope you will find useful. We look forward to another fruitful year of furthering our democracy through nationwide elections, advancing regional trade and economic growth, and deepening engagement with the United States and other partners.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like further information about these or other developments.

Warm regards,

Bashir Goth, Somaliland Representative to the United States



Somaliland on the International Stage

Foreign Minister Kayd makes inaugural official visit to Washington, DC and New York

In November, a high-level government delegation from Somaliland, led by Foreign Minister Essa Abdirahme Kayd and Special Envoy Edna Adan Ismail, conducted a six-day visit to Washington, DC and New York City, where they met with a wide range of senior government officials, advocacy organizations, experts and academics focused on the Horn of Africa. They also held community events with members of the Somaliland diaspora in the Washington, DC area.



MFA Somaliland ✓
@somalilandmfa

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The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hon. Dr. Essa Kayd along with Dr. Edna Aden visited the Somaliland Diplomatic Mission to USA.



12:09 PM · Nov 15, 2021 · Twitter for Android

Foreign Minister Kayd and Special Envoy Adan highlighted the growing need for closer ties with the United States given the many areas of mutual interest on economic, security and governance issues in the Horn of Africa. The delegation also outlined the challenges that Somaliland continues to face as an unrecognized nation, including acquiring COVID-19 vaccines from the international community, and discussed ways to advance cooperation between Somaliland and the United States.

Speaking to [Politico](#) following his meeting with the delegation, Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) said, “My view is that the United States should be more engaged with Somaliland, [and] what we’re looking at is the opening of an office in Somaliland that would include some diplomatic representation.” [Read more](#)



U.S. Congressional staff delegation concludes five-day visit to Somaliland

A U.S. Congressional staff delegation concluded a five-day visit to Somaliland organized by the Humpty Dumpty Institute (HDI) in December following a series of meetings with members of Somaliland's government, civil society organizations and business, education, health and conservation institutions. The delegation – composed of senior committee and personal office staff from the House and Senate – also visited the country's Berbera Port and recently renovated airport. After meeting with the U.S. delegation, President Bihi reiterated Somaliland's commitment to working with democratic nations. [Read more](#)



Gavin Williamson ✓
@GavinWilliamson

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It is an absolute honour to be bringing the important issue of recognition of Somaliland to the floor of the House of Commons. Our nations have long historic ties and now it is the time to make history together.



Muse Bihi Abdi ✓ @musebihi · Jan 18

Thank you @GavinWilliamson for leading the way and calling for a debate on the recognition of the Republic of Somaliland. I hope your Government will be willing to listen you and other MPs at @HouseofCommons.

All Somalilanders in and abroad are waiting this rightful ambition.



11:13 AM · Jan 18, 2022 · Twitter Web App

U.K. House of Commons debates Somaliland recognition

On January 18, the House of Commons of the United Kingdom held a debate to discuss potential recognition of Somaliland by the U.K. government. The debate was introduced by Gavin Williamson, a Member of Parliament (MP) from South

Staffordshire and former U.K. Secretary of State for Defense. He explained that, “The key reason for this debate is to discuss the fact that Somaliland has developed so much. In those years of conflict—where so many Somalilanders had their lives under threat, and so many hundreds of thousands were displaced, both internally within Somaliland and externally—that dream and that vision of creating their own homeland once again and re-establishing those old territorial borders burned bright, and that is what they were able to achieve in 1991.”

MPs advocating for Somaliland’s recognition emphasized its robust development in areas of trade, investment and democracy over the past thirty years, as well as its strategic location for British investors and businesses looking to enter the region’s markets. Discussing Somaliland’s relationship with the U.K. as a former British colony, MP Bob Stewart of Beckenham said, “The people of Somaliland have a real affection for this country. That goes back a long time, and it would be absolutely right of our Government to encourage, support and allow Somaliland to be a real nation.” MPs further argued that while Somaliland has successfully self-governed as an unrecognized state, international recognition is essential to providing necessary humanitarian, security and economic aid. [Read more](#)

WSJ

Wall Street Journal: Growing momentum in U.S.-Somaliland relations

This month, *The Wall Street Journal* explored the dynamics that are encouraging closer relations between the United States and Somaliland. The article examined

Somaliland's strategic location, in particular the possibility of Somaliland's permitting U.S. access to seaport and airfield facilities in Berbera. Reporting highlighted the significance of Somaliland's recognition and establishment of diplomatic relations with Taiwan, as well as growing support for Somaliland in the U.S. Congress, quoting Sen. Jim Risch (R-ID), Ranking Member on the Foreign Relations Committee: "The continued instability in the Horn of Africa and heightened global competition for resources and influence make it all the more important that we work with like-minded partners in the region, like Somaliland, committed to peace, democracy, and prosperity." [Read more](#)

Representative Goth provides remarks at Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs

Somaliland Representative to the United States Bashir Goth was featured in an August event hosted by the Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs on the history of Somaliland. During the event, Rep. Goth spoke to local business leaders about Somaliland's history and developments since the country reclaimed its independence 30 years ago. In particular, Rep. Goth highlighted Somaliland's successes in establishing security and economic opportunities for its citizens. Rep. Goth said, "Somaliland has all the requirements of nationhood, including a democratically-elected government with three distinct branches: a legislative branch composed of a bicameral parliament, a judicial branch and an executive branch. It has its own currency and passports, military and security forces, and educational system, including an American school and a university. While Somaliland's independence is not yet recognized, U.S. interest is growing."

Somaliland is Open for Business

DP World and UK's CDC Group announce new investment in Somaliland

In early October, Dubai-based ports operator DP World and Britain's development finance agency, the CDC Group, [announced](#) plans to jointly invest up to \$1.72 billion in

logistics infrastructure in Africa, starting with the modernization of Somaliland's Berbera Port, as well as ports in Egypt and Senegal. The announcement came shortly after the Government of Somaliland and DP World inaugurated a new container terminal at the Berbera Port in June, marking the completion of the first phase of the port expansion project. [Read more](#)



Somaliland inaugurates renovated Berbera International Airport

The Government of Somaliland officially opened the renovated Berbera International Airport in late November. The opening was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by President Bihi and a high-level delegation from the United Arab Emirates, which invested \$55 million in rebuilding the airport for passenger and cargo services. The revamped facility features a newly expanded main terminal, refurbished runways and modernized security screening areas. It will serve as a crucial point of connectivity for the country as it continues to grow its position as a major regional trade hub. [Read more](#)



Somaliland makes progress on curbing illegal cheetah trafficking

Somaliland's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, in coordination with the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), has made significant progress in [curbing](#) illegal poaching and smuggling of cheetahs in the country over the last year. The ministry found no reported cases of cheetah poaching between October 2020 and August 2021 following a wave of rescue missions led by the two agencies with the support of Somaliland's coast guard, army, parliament, attorney general and Ministry of the Interior. CCF continues to support the Ministry's conservation efforts through its three operational [facilities](#) in Hargeisa.

In December, CCF and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change broke ground on the CCF Somaliland Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre (CRCC), which will serve as both a rescue facility and a tourist destination and is expected to be completed this year. CCF Founder and Executive Director, Dr. Laurie Marker, said that the CRCC "will be the first facility of its kind in the Horn of Africa, the region where most cheetah confiscation events occur. The Ministry in Somaliland has been CCF's

best partner in addressing the illegal trade in cheetahs, and the development of the CRCC is a testament to the progress we are making.” [Read more](#)



Government of Somaliland pledges collaboration with online media association

In early January, Somaliland’s Ministry of Information and Communication Technology met with top representatives from the Somaliland Online Media Association (SOMA), an organization representing nearly all of Somaliland’s major media outlets. Attendees discussed the role of online media in the process of democratization and promoting Somaliland’s case for international recognition. The Ministry briefed SOMA on ongoing preparations of the country’s Social Media Code of Conduct and pledged continued dialogue with the Association as it is finalized. [Read more](#)

DW News: Self-governing, autonomous Somaliland

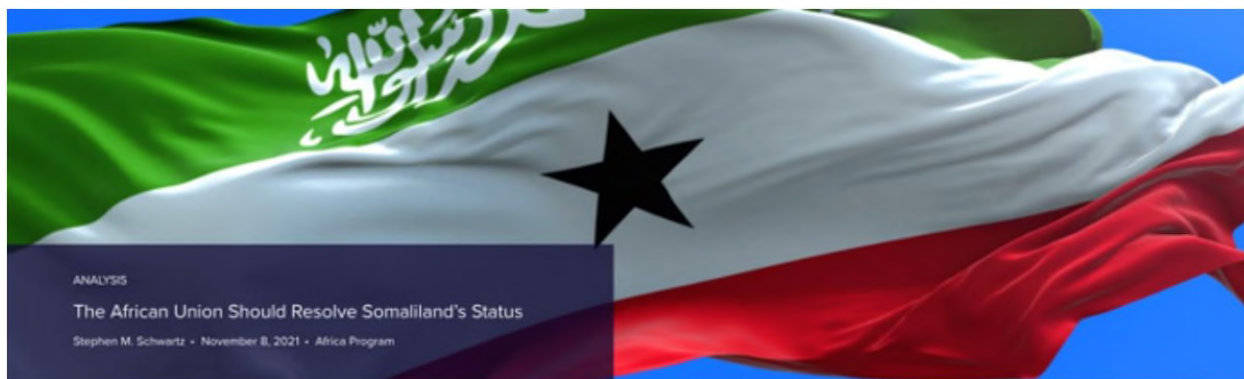
In a video profile for DW News, Mariel Muller, the outlet's East Africa correspondent, highlighted the challenges that Somaliland faces as an unrecognized nation. After traveling to Somaliland, she said that the country "feels like a normal state. There are normal government institutions. Somaliland has its own flag, its own currency, and its own military. Somalilanders are proud that Somaliland is safe compared to Somalia." She further highlighted the evolving role of women in Somaliland's traditionally male-dominated society, featuring the story of by Zuhuur Fathi Muktar, the first female Captain in the Somaliland Coast Guard, as an example of progress in advancing the rights of women. [Read more](#)

Closing Viewpoints



"The U.S. Should Recognize Somaliland"

In a report for the Heritage Foundation, Joshua Meservey, Senior Policy Analyst for Africa and the Middle East, urges the U.S. to recognize Somaliland as an independent country, saying: "A strong relationship with an independent Somaliland would...demonstrate the benefits Washington confers on those who embrace representative government and would allow the U.S. to better support the territory's tenacious, but still-consolidating, democracy. An independent Somaliland would be a stable partner that has little risk of experiencing the tumult that frustrates American interests elsewhere in the volatile region." [Read more](#)



“The African Union Should Resolve Somaliland’s Status”

Former U.S. Ambassador to Somalia Stephen Schwartz calls on the African Union to resolve Somaliland’s status in an analysis for the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI), writing: “The United States should work with African and non-African states to persuade the African Union to lead the process to resolve Somaliland’s status. The African Union has the mandate and legitimacy to address the issue and to act authoritatively in the eyes of Africans and the international community.” [Read more](#)

THE
NATIONAL
INTEREST

“China’s Worldwide Expansion Plan Stops in Somaliland”

Discussing Somaliland’s successful deterrence of Chinese influence, Robert O’Brien, former U.S. National Security Advisor, writes: “Recognizing a stable and democratic Somaliland in the Horn of Africa as an independent country is a key step in stemming the Chinese Communist Party’s rising tide on the continent, which brackets the western border of the region.” [Read more](#)



“How Somaliland is playing its geostrategic cards better than most”

In an analysis for the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, Jamestown Foundation fellow Michael Horton says international recognition of Somaliland is critical to protect the progress the country has made in developing its institutions and economy, writing: “More than ever, Somaliland deserves and needs international recognition for the great strides it has made to establish a democratic and durable government. The United States has an opportunity to solidify its relationship with a nation that has a proven record of adhering to the values and forms of governance that it supports.” [Read more](#)



Office of the Somaliland Representative in the United States

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